

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of monitoring status of an office machine communicatively coupled to a network, comprising:

transmitting status information of the office machine over the Internet using an Internet email protocol;

receiving the status information at a monitoring device, ~~wherein the status information passes through a firewall associated with the monitoring device prior to being received by the monitoring device~~; and

storing the status information in a database associated with the monitoring device, wherein the status information is stored in association with an identifier that uniquely identifies the office machine,

wherein the office machine is one of a printer, a copier, a scanner, a metering system, and a vending machine.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the office machine is a printer.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the office machine is a digital copier.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the office machine is a facsimile machine.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting step comprises:
transmitting status information of the office machine as an electronic mail message over the Internet.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

storing a serial number of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

storing model information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

storing attachment information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

storing a collection date in association with the status information, wherein the collection date indicates a date that the status information was received at the monitoring device.

10. (Currently Amended) A system for monitoring status of an office machine communicatively coupled to a network, comprising:

means for transmitting status information of the office machine over the Internet using an Internet email protocol;

means for receiving the status information at a monitoring device, ~~wherein the status information passes through a firewall associated with the monitoring device prior to being received by the monitoring device~~; and

means for storing the status information in a database associated with the monitoring device, wherein the status information is stored in association with an identifier that uniquely identifies the office machine,

wherein the office machine is one of a printer, a copier, a scanner, a metering system, and a vending machine.

11. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the office machine is a printer.

12. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the office machine is a digital copier.

13. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the office machine is a facsimile machine.

14. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the means for transmitting comprises:
means for transmitting status information of the office machine as an electronic mail message over the Internet.

15. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:
means for storing a serial number of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

16. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:
means for storing model information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

17. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:

means for storing attachment information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

18. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:

means for storing a collection date in association with the status information, wherein the collection date indicates a date that the status information was received at the monitoring device.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer program product having a computer usable medium for monitoring status of an office machine communicatively coupled to a network, comprising:

instructions for transmitting status information of the office machine over the Internet using an Internet email protocol;

instructions for receiving the status information at a monitoring device, ~~wherein the status information passes through a firewall associated with the monitoring device prior to being received by the monitoring device~~; and

instructions for storing the status information in a database associated with the monitoring device, wherein the status information is stored in association with an identifier that uniquely identifies the office machine,

wherein the office machine is one of a printer, a copier, a scanner, a metering system, and a vending machine.

20. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the office machine is a printer.

21. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the office machine is a digital copier.

22. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the office machine is a facsimile machine.

23. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the instructions for transmitting comprise:

instructions for transmitting status information of the office machine as an electronic mail message over the Internet.

24. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising:
instructions for storing a serial number of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

25. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising:
instructions for storing model information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

26. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising:
instructions for storing attachment information of the office machine in the database in association with the status information.

27. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising:

instructions for storing a collection date in association with the status information, wherein the collection date indicates a date that the status information was received at the monitoring device.